

ATTACHMENT - CLAIMS LISTING

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1. (Currently Amended) A punching tool, having a guided, axially displaceable die plunger, which is fixed against relative rotation, in a guide bushing and having a bore in the front end in which a punching die can be axially fixed, the punching die provided with an annular groove, holding elements located in transverse bores in the die plunger, which holding elements releasably engage the annular groove, wherein during the punching stroke the punching die rests against a front face of the die plunger and can be axially fixed in place by said holding elements which are maintained in engagement with the annular groove by means of an elastic washer, wherein said elastic washer is in contact with the holding elements, the outer diameter of which elastic washer is less in the engagement position than the inner diameter of the guide bushing and which elastic washer can be widened to a diameter greater than the inner diameter of the guide bushing when the die plunger is removed from the guide bushing.

2. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein in the engagement position the outer diameter of the elastic washer is only slightly less than the inner diameter of the guide bushing.

3. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the elastic washer is made of steel.
4. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the elastic washer is seated in a further annular groove located in the circumferential surface of the die plunger, which further annular groove crosses the central longitudinal axes of the transverse bores and is only slightly less wide than the width of the elastic washers.
5. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the shaft of the punching die is formed with a flange, the rear of which rests against the front end face of the die plunger.
6. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 5, wherein the distance between the transverse plane in which the longitudinal axes of the transverse bores are located and the front end face of the die plunger is of such a size in relation to the distance between the central transverse plane through the annular groove in the punching die and the back of the flange that the punching die can be pressed axially against the die plunger by means of the holding elements.
7. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the rear end face of the punching die rests against the bottom of the said bore in the die plunger.

8. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 7, wherein the distance between the transverse plane in which the longitudinal axes of the transverse bores are located and the bottom of the bore is of such a size in relation to the distance between the central transverse plane through the annular groove in the punching die and the rear end face of the punching die that the punching die can be pressed axially against the die plunger by means of the holding elements.

9. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the punching die is further provided with a punch die longitudinal groove into which a transverse pin can be inserted, wherein the diameter of the pin matches the width of the punch die longitudinal groove.

10. (Previously Presented) A punching tool in accordance with claim 9, wherein the transverse pin projects radially outward out of the die plunger into a guide bushing longitudinal groove located in the guide bushing.

11. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the ends of the transverse bores facing the annular groove are tapered inwardly so as to prevent the holding elements from coming out of the transverse bores when the punching die is not in the die plunger.

12. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 1, wherein the holding elements are balls which are of such a diameter as to snap fit into the annular groove.
13. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein in the engagement position the outer diameter of the elastic washer is only slightly less than the inner diameter of the guide bushing.
14. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the elastic washer is made of steel.
15. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the elastic washer is seated in a further annular groove located in the circumferential surface of the die plunger, which further annular groove crosses the central longitudinal axes of the transverse bores.
16. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the shaft of the punching die is formed with a flange, the rear of which rests against the front end face of the die plunger.
17. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the rear end face of the punching die rests against the bottom of the said bore in the die plunger.

18. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the punching die is further provided with a punch die longitudinal groove into which a transverse pin can be inserted, wherein the diameter of the pin matches the width of the punch die longitudinal groove.

19. (Previously Presented) The punching tool in accordance with claim 12, wherein the ends of the transverse bores facing the annular groove are tapered inwardly so as to prevent the balls from coming out of the transverse bores when the punching die is not in the die plunger.

20. (Previously Presented) The punching tool of claim 1, wherein the elastic washer provides a radially inward biasing force on the holding elements to keep the holding elements in the engagement position.

21. (New) A punching tool, having a guided, axially displaceable die plunger, which is fixed against relative rotation, in a guide bushing and having a bore in the front end in which a punching die can be axially fixed, the punching die provided with an annular groove, holding elements located in transverse bores in the die plunger, which holding elements releasably engage the annular groove, wherein during the punching stroke the punching die rests against a front face of the die plunger and can be axially fixed in place by said holding elements which are maintained in engagement with the annular groove by means of an elastic washer, the elastic washer being seated in a further

annular groove located in the circumferential surface of the die plunger, which further annular groove crosses the central longitudinal axes of the transverse bores and is only slightly less wide than the width of the elastic washer, the outer diameter of which elastic washer is less in the engagement position than the inner diameter of the guide bushing and which elastic washer can be widened to a diameter greater than the inner diameter of the guide bushing when the die plunger is removed from the guide bushing.

22. (New) A punching tool, having a guided, axially displaceable die plunger, which is fixed against relative rotation, in a guide bushing and having a bore in the front end in which a punching die can be axially fixed, the punching die provided with an annular groove, the punching die having a punch die longitudinal groove into which a transverse pin can be inserted, wherein the diameter of the pin matches the width of the punch die longitudinal groove, holding elements located in transverse bores in the die plunger, which holding elements releasably engage the annular groove, wherein during the punching stroke the punching die rests against a front face of the die plunger and can be axially fixed in place by said holding elements which are maintained in engagement with the annular groove by means of an elastic washer, the outer diameter of which elastic washer is less in the engagement position than the inner diameter of the guide bushing and which elastic washer can be widened to a diameter greater than the inner diameter of the guide bushing when the die plunger is removed from the guide bushing.

23. (New) A punching tool, having a guided, axially displaceable die plunger, which is fixed against relative rotation, in a guide bushing and having a bore in the front end in

which a punching die can be axially fixed, the punching die provided with an annular groove, holding elements located in transverse bores in the die plunger, which holding elements releasably engage the annular groove, wherein during the punching stroke the punching die rests against a front face of the die plunger and can be axially fixed in place by said holding elements which are maintained in engagement with the annular groove by means of an elastic washer, the elastic washer being being seated in a further annular groove located in the circumferential surface of the die plunger, which further annular groove crosses the central longitudinal axes of the transverse bores, the outer diameter of which elastic washer is less in the engagement position than the inner diameter of the guide bushing and which elastic washer can be widened to a diameter greater than the inner diameter of the guide bushing when the die plunger is removed from the guide bushing.